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FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT, 1994: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE LINKAGES BETWEEN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND ON GENDER ISSUES AND THE FAMILY

Concise report on world population monitoring, 1997: international migration and development

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present concise report on international migration and development has been prepared in accordance with the terms of reference of the Commission on Population and Development and its topic-oriented prioritized multi-year work programme, which was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1995/55.

This report provides a summary of recent information on selected aspects of international migration and covers such topics as the international migration agenda from Bucharest to Cairo and beyond; migration dynamics; international migration policies; documented and undocumented migrants; refugees and asylum-seekers; labour migration; gender issues; and interlinkages between migration and development. The preliminary, unedited version of the full report is available as a working paper in document ESA/P/WP132.

The report was prepared by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat. Acknowledgements are due to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the International Labour Organization which prepared, respectively, for the full report, the chapter on refugees and asylum-seekers, and that on international labour migration, on which the sections on these subjects in this concise report are based.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1	3
I.	THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AGENDA: FROM BUCHAREST TO CAIRO AND BEYOND	2 - 11	3
II.	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND POPULATION DYNAMICS	12 - 29	5
	A. Definitions, data sources and measurement issues	12 - 19	5
	B. Role of international migration in the growth of population	20 - 22	7
	C. Levels and trends of international migration	23 - 29	8
III.	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION POLICIES	30 - 40	11
IV.	DOCUMENTED MIGRANTS	41 - 42	14
V.	UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS	43	15
VI.	REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS	44 - 48	16
VII.	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION	49 - 56	17
VIII.	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND GENDER ISSUES	57 - 63	19
IX.	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT	64 - 80	21
	A. The root causes of international migration	68 - 71	22
	B. Trade, development assistance and migration	72 - 74	22
	C. Impact of international migration on countries of origin	75 - 77	23
	D. Impact of international migration on countries of destination	78 - 80	24
X.	FINAL REMARKS	81	24

INTRODUCTION

1. International migration has been widely recognized as a vital element in the development process, both influencing and being influenced by development. For many countries and regions, international migration can also be an influential component affecting population growth. Consequently, issues related to international migration have been in the international agenda for many years. The present report reviews selected aspects of international migration and development. Section I reviews how international migration issues have been examined in the three major United Nations conferences dealing with population as well as at other related major United Nations conferences. Section II discusses the relationship between international migration and population dynamics, including issues related to definitions, data sources and measurement, the role of international migration in population growth, and levels, trends and characteristics of foreign stock. Section III examines Governments' views on international migration and how these views have changed over time, as well as implementation and management of migration policies. Sections IV, V and VI review specific issues related, respectively, to documented migrants, undocumented migrants and refugees and asylum-seekers. Section VII considers international labour migration. International migration and gender issues are discussed in section VIII. Finally, section IX discusses the complex interrelationships between international migration and development.

I. THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AGENDA: FROM BUCHAREST TO CAIRO AND BEYOND

2. The World Population Plan of Action[1] adopted at the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974 addressed the needs of documented migrants by focusing primarily on those admitted as workers. The World Population Plan made several recommendations in this regard. Undocumented migration was addressed by only one recommendation (56), which urged Governments to respect the basic human rights of undocumented migrants, prevent their exploitation and combat undocumented migration. Refugees also received scant attention, with one recommendation (53), specifying that problems of refugees should be settled in accordance with international instruments.

3. As regards international migration, the World Population Plan was a landmark achievement. By emphasizing that migration policies should be grounded in the economic and social needs of both sending and receiving countries, it placed international migration squarely within the broader context of socio-economic development.

4. At the 1984 International Conference on Population in Mexico City, the recommendations for the further implementation of the World Population Plan[2] emphasized the importance of considering separately documented labour migration, undocumented labour migration and refugees. The 1984 recommendations also referred to the 1975 International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (No. 143),[3] adopted just after the adoption of the World Population Plan.

5. Concerning refugees/asylum-seekers, in the 1984 recommendations Governments were invited to consider acceding - as they had not been in the 1974 World Population Plan - to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees[4] and its 1967 Protocol.[5] Governments and international organizations were asked to find durable solutions to refugee-related problems, by providing assistance to countries of first asylum, creating conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation and facilitating local integration where repatriation was not possible. Aside from a provision regarding the non-refoulement of refugees, the problem of the individual's right to asylum was not addressed.

6. It should be noted that the inter-conference period between 1974 and 1984 witnessed a flurry of activity by the international community on international migration. In the area of migrant workers, the International Labour Conference adopted Convention No. 143. The General Assembly adopted resolution 32/120 of 16 December 1977, in which the Assembly invited all States to extend to migrant workers treatment equal to that enjoyed by their own nationals. In its resolution 33/163 of 20 December 1978, the Assembly reiterated that invitation. In its resolution 34/172 of 17 December 1979, the Assembly decided to create at its thirty-fifth session a working group to elaborate an international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families. The Assembly also adopted a series of resolutions dealing with refugees, including its resolution 34/60 of 29 November 1979 in which the Assembly noted with deep concern the continued gravity of the problems of refugees and its resolution 35/124 of 11 December 1980 in which it noted that flows of refugees could impose great political, economic and social burdens upon the international community.

7. In the latter half of the 1980s and early 1990s, growing demographic and labour-market imbalances, widening disparities in economic growth and development between countries and regions, and sweeping changes in global political and economic systems contributed to the intensification of migration pressures. The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[6] adopted in Cairo in 1994, reflects many of these recent developments, while incorporating new approaches and new actions. There is considerable emphasis on examining the root causes of population movements and working towards long-term solutions, for example, creating such conditions as would render remaining in one's country a viable option. Governments are asked to foster the inflow of migrants' remittances, to embrace short-term migration as a form of technology transfer, to promote physical protection of refugee women and children, to involve refugees in planning of refugee assistance, and to promote repatriation by assisting in landmine removal.

8. In addition, new and emerging issues were identified. Examples include the possible negative impact of short-term migration on working conditions in host countries, migration pressures due to climatic change, the protection of migrant women and children from abuse by their sponsors, the right of receiving countries to regulate access to their territory, the adverse consequences of forced migration, the situation of persons whose asylum claims have been rejected, the trafficking in women and children, prostitution and coercive adoption, and the sudden and massive arrival of refugees and displaced persons in need of international protection.

9. There have been a number of follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development related to international migration. The General Assembly adopted resolution 49/127 of 19 December 1994 in which it requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on international migration and development, including aspects related to objectives and modalities for the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development; in response, a report of the Secretary-General (E/1995/69) (of 14 June 1995) on economic and environmental questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions was prepared. The Commission on Population and Development, at its twenty-eighth session in 1995, decided to devote its session in 1997 to the consideration of issues related to international migration and development,[7] while the Assembly in its resolution 50/123 of 20 December 1995, decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "International migration and development, including the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development".

10. Discussions on international migration issues have also been pursued in other major United Nations conferences. Agenda 21,[8] adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, makes reference to the need for policies and programmes for dealing with migrations that result from or induce environmental disruption. The Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development[9] of 1995 contains a section (chap. IV, sect. E) on the social needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, and documented and undocumented migrants. The Platform for Action[10] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 has portions devoted to women and migration.

11. In conclusion, one feature of the subject that emerges is the fact that international migration has always been a function of the changing political, economic and social context in which it is discussed. Nevertheless, running through all discussions of migration are three common threads: the lack of migration data, the absence of a coherent theory to explain international migration, and the very weak understanding of the complex interrelationships between migration and development.

II. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND POPULATION DYNAMICS

A. Definitions, data sources and measurement issues

12. Despite the growing importance of international migration, the statistics needed to characterize migration flows and monitor changes over time are often lacking. The current set of United Nations recommendations on international migration statistics was adopted by the member Governments in 1976. In February 1997, the Statistical Commission will be considering a report (E/CN.3/1997/15) that sets forth revised recommendations on statistics of international migrant flows and on the measurement of stocks relevant to the study of international migration. The report for the consideration of the Statistical Commission, which was prepared in collaboration with the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat, was based on an extensive review carried out jointly by the United Nations Statistics Division and the Statistical Office of the European Communities in cooperation with the regional

commissions and other interested organizations. Many of the points discussed in the present section are considered more thoroughly in the report to the Statistical Commission.

13. International migration occurs when a person who lives in one country moves to another. However, not every person who crosses an international border is an international migrant. It is necessary to set criteria to differentiate international migrants from the generality of international travellers. Duration of stay in the country of destination can be used to make such a distinction but, because some tourists may stay longer than persons admitted to undertake seasonal work or undergo training, consideration of duration of stay may not be sufficient. In practice, account must be taken of the State's control over migration and of the fact that the State usually exerts minimal control on the movement of its own citizens while it restricts the admission of foreigners. From the State's perspective, the characterization of international migrants depends on the factors of citizenship and reason for admission, both of which are legal in character.

14. Data on international migration can be obtained from three types of sources: (a) administrative sources; (b) border statistics; and (c) household-based inquiries. Administrative sources include population registers, registers of foreigners, information derived from the issuance of visas, residence permits, work permits and exit clearances. Border statistics encompass all data gathered at the time of border control and may be administrative or purely statistical in nature. Household-based inquiries include censuses and various types of household surveys.

15. Administrative sources yield data based on administrative or regulatory criteria. Certain administrative sources, such as population registers, can produce fairly reliable information on the migration of citizens and foreigners. However, other administrative sources, such as statistics derived from the issuance of visas or residence permits, can provide information only about foreigners and, because the procedures they reflect need not be contemporaneous with migration, they may not be adequate indicators of the timing of the latter. Thus, in countries where foreigners can adjust their status after entry, residence permits may be issued long after a person has moved into the country.

16. Border statistics have the advantage of reflecting accurately the timing of a move and tend to cover the movements of both foreigners and citizens in comparable ways. However, in only a few countries do border statistics produce reliable data on international migration. Countries having only a few well-controlled ports of entry and departure are more likely than others to gather useful border statistics. For most countries, the sheer volume of people travelling internationally makes the gathering of complete and accurate information on international migrants at the border a challenge. Only a few countries produce adequate statistics on international migration flows and the data gathered are not always comparable across countries.

17. With respect to household-based inquiries, censuses and household surveys are mostly used to measure migrant stocks. For this purpose, international migrants are generally defined in terms of place of birth (they are equated with the foreign-born). Data on the foreign-born are available for 61 per cent of

the countries that conducted a census during 1975-1984. Countries that do not gather information on place of birth tend, instead, to gather information on citizenship (39 per cent of countries conducting a census during 1975-1984 gathered such information). Although foreigners cannot be equated with international migrants, their number can be used as an indicator of the migrant stock in countries lacking data on the foreign-born.

18. Undocumented or irregular migration usually eludes statistical accounting. The term refers to that group of international migrants who have not fulfilled all the requirements set by the receiving State for entering its territory, residing within it or exercising an economic activity remunerated from within it. Given the variety of scenarios that can lead to an undocumented situation, it is not possible to suggest a unique methodology for its measurement. Attempts made to quantify undocumented or irregular migration in particular cases have relied heavily on the specificity of each situation not only in regard to the type of irregular situation that predominates but also with respect to the type of information that is already available and may provide some basis for estimation. Information relevant to the measurement of undocumented migration can be gathered in both countries of origin and countries of destination. The richer the information available in terms of the variety of data sources, the type of coverage of each, the characteristics recorded and the ease in obtaining special tabulations, the more likely that acceptable estimates may be derived.

19. With respect to data on refugees and asylum-seekers, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) gathers information from Governments concerning the number of refugees in their territories by using special forms that are filled out annually. The information relates to stocks at the end of a calendar year and a distinction is made between refugees and other groups that are of concern to UNHCR, including internally displaced persons, returnees and refugees repatriating voluntarily either on their own or through organized programmes. The category of refugees includes refugees according to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, persons recognized as refugees under the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa,[11] and persons recognized by UNHCR. UNHCR statistical reports explain that the quality of the data presented varies considerably among countries, being based on detailed registration in some and on rough extrapolations based on health surveys or on "visual assessments" in others.

B. Role of international migration in the growth of population

20. International migration can play an important role in the growth of population. Based on The 1996 Revision of the official United Nations population estimates and projections, prepared by the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat, 45 per cent of the overall population growth in the more developed regions for 1990-1995 was attributed to net international migration. On the other hand, international migration lowered slightly the overall growth rate of the population in the less developed regions by 3 per cent.

21. While Europe, Northern America and Australia-New Zealand exhibited net in-migration, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the less developed regions of Oceania showed net out-migration. Around one third of the population growth rate of Northern America and Australia-New Zealand was due to international migration in 1990-1995. The impact of international migration on population growth is particularly important in Europe, where almost 88 per cent of the population growth rate during the period 1990-1995 came from international migration.

22. The net out-migration rate for Africa as a whole was -0.2 per 1,000 in 1990-1995, which contributed to a reduction in the growth rate of population by less than 1 per cent. Asia and the less developed regions of Oceania (Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia) exhibited net out-migration of -0.4 per 1,000 and -1.4 per 1,000, respectively, in 1990-1995. All the regions in Latin America and the Caribbean showed a net out-migration in 1990-1995 reducing the population growth rate by 7 per cent.

C. Levels and trends of international migration

23. The number of international migrants (foreign-born stock) in the world rose from 75 million in 1965 to 120 million in 1990, exhibiting an annual growth rate of 1.9 per cent over the period 1965-1990. However, the annual rate of growth of the international migrant stock has been rising, passing from 1.2 per cent per year during 1965-1975 to 2.2 per cent annually during 1975-1985 and reaching 2.6 per cent per year during 1985-1990. Despite such accelerating growth, by 1990 international migrants accounted for just 2.3 per cent of the total population of the world. However, their distribution by region was far from uniform (see table). Thus, in 1990 international migrants constituted 4.5 per cent of the population of the more developed regions and 1.6 per cent of that in the less developed regions. In Oceania, international migrants made up 18 per cent of the population; in Western Asia they accounted for nearly 11 per cent; in Northern America their share of the population stood at 8.6 per cent, and in the market-economy countries of Europe they constituted over 6 per cent of the population.

Number and distribution of international migrants by major area, 1990

Major area	Number of migrants Millions	Percentage of world total
World	120	100
Africa	16	13
Asia	43	36
Europe and the former USSR	25	21
Latin America and the Caribbean	7	6
Northern America	24	20
Oceania	5	4

24. In 1990 Africa was hosting an estimated 15.6 million international migrants or 13 per cent of the world's migrant stock (see table). Refugees constituted almost 30 per cent of that total (4.6 million). During the 1990s, the resolution of some long-standing conflicts in the region made possible the repatriation of sizeable numbers of refugees. In 1994 alone, over 1.8 million refugees returned to their countries of origin and by the end of the year there were 3.1 million returnees of concern to UNHCR. However, the emergence of new conflicts, such as the war in Liberia, the clan-based conflict in Somalia and the ethnic confrontation in Rwanda, have led to new refugee outflows. Thus, by early 1995, the number of refugees in Africa reached a high of 6.8 million, only to decline to 5.7 million by early 1996 because of the voluntary repatriation of Tutsis to Rwanda. With regard to other types of migration in Africa, information is sparse. Although there are reports of increasing undocumented migration in the region, data on the issue are rare.

25. According to global estimates of the migrant stock, Asia was hosting in 1990 nearly 36 per cent of all international migrants in the world (43 million). The majority were concentrated in South-central Asia (21 million) and Western Asia (14 million). In South-central Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan were providing asylum to 5.7 million Afghan refugees in 1990. In 1993, Afghan refugees began returning to their country, but the persistence of conflict has slowed their repatriation. The Islamic Republic of Iran also provided a safe haven for Iraqi Kurds fleeing civil unrest after the Gulf war, most of whom returned to settle in the demilitarized zones established along the Iraq-Turkey border. In Western Asia, Israel has received sizeable inflows of immigrants from the Russian Federation and other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and, in addition, has begun to import temporary migrant workers from both European and South-eastern Asian countries. The six member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been importing migrant workers since the 1970s. Consequently, the foreign population in those countries rose from 1.9 million in 1975 to 8.0 million in 1990. Although the Gulf war led to the repatriation of numerous migrants, evidence on the placement of workers originating in the labour-exporting countries of Southern and South-eastern Asia indicates that migration to Western Asia has rebounded. Nevertheless, the diversification of destinations for migrant workers from other Asian countries has increased, particularly in the cases of China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. Japan and the newly industrializing economies of Asia are the most common alternative destinations. In addition, there are reports of rising undocumented migration in some of these countries.

26. In 1990, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean were hosting 7.5 million international migrants, corresponding to 6.2 per cent of the migrant stock of the world. Between 1975 and 1990, most of the growth of the migrant stock in the region was attributable to the increasing number of migrants in Central America (427,000 in 1975 rising to 2,047,000 in 1990), the majority of whom had fled conflict and civil strife in their countries. With the resolution of those conflicts, the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons in the region became possible. Thus, by early 1996, the number of refugees in Central America stood at 75,000, down from 1.2 million in 1990. Information on other intraregional migration flows in Latin America and the Caribbean is meagre. There is better information on the outflow of Latin Americans to Northern America. For most countries in the region, the major country of destination is

the United States of America. During 1990-1994, 37 per cent of the 3.8 million immigrants admitted by that country originated in Latin America and the Caribbean; in addition, of the 2.7 million foreigners who regularized their status under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), about 90 per cent had originated in the region.

27. In Northern America, both Canada and the United States registered an increase in the number of immigrants admitted during 1990-1994 in comparison with those admitted during 1985-1989. In Canada, the rise was from 690,000 to 1,170,000 immigrants, and in the United States from 3,028,000 to 3,849,000 (excluding persons legalized under IRCA). In both countries, immigrants originating in Asia predominated, constituting 55 per cent of those admitted by Canada during 1990-1992, and 42 per cent of those admitted by the United States during 1990-1994. In the United States, immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean accounted for 37 per cent of the total, whereas in Canada their share was 17 per cent. Persons of European origin accounted for 18 per cent of the immigrants to the United States and for 20 per cent of those to Canada.

28. In Oceania, Australia and New Zealand experienced major changes in trends between 1985-1989 and 1990-1994. In Australia, the number of immigrants declined from 615,800 to 462,600. In New Zealand, the number of persons admitted for at least a year rose from 221,200 to 274,700 and the number departing for at least a year declined from 307,000 to 220,800, leading therefore to a marked change in net migration from a loss of 85,800 persons in 1985-1989 to a net gain of 53,800 persons in 1990-1994. Given that New Zealand had been recording net migration losses since 1975, the net gain for the most recent period represents a major change in trends.

29. With an estimated 25 million migrants in 1990, Europe and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) accounted for 21 per cent of the world's migrant population. That number is likely to have grown substantially during 1990-1994 because of the break-up of the USSR and Yugoslavia in 1991. According to the 1989 census of the USSR, what is now the Russian Federation alone had at least 10 million persons born in other parts of the former USSR and 25 million Russians were living in non-Russian republics. More recently it has been estimated that between 54 million and 65 million persons living in the successor States of the USSR are not citizens of their State of residence. The major political changes taking place in Eastern-bloc countries facilitated the migration of certain groups. Thus, between 1987 and 1993, Germany received nearly 1.7 million ethnic Germans from Eastern-bloc countries. In addition, the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and the conflict that ensued have given rise to the largest number of refugees in Europe since 1945. Thus, the number of refugees in the region rose from 0.8 million early in 1990 to 2.1 million in early 1996. During the 1980s, partly as a result of the reduction of travel restrictions in Eastern-bloc countries, the number of applications for asylum filed in other European countries increased markedly, passing from 67,000 in 1982 to 694,000 in 1992 when their number peaked. By 1994 their number had declined to 320,000. Although most asylum-seekers failed to obtain refugee status, significant proportions were allowed to stay for humanitarian reasons.

III. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION POLICIES

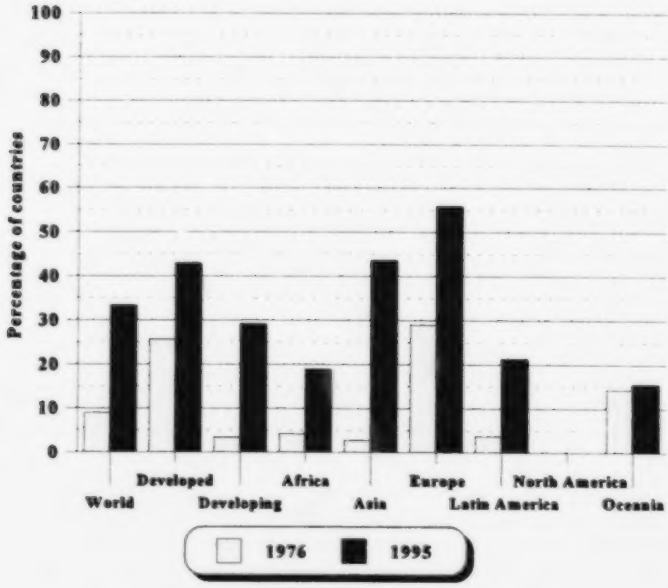
30. When the monitoring of Governments' views and perceptions towards migration first began in 1976, international migration was a topic of secondary concern for many Governments. Only a minority of Governments had explicit policies with respect to intervening in migration levels: 13 per cent of countries had policies to raise or lower immigration, and 17 per cent to raise or lower emigration. Today, the situation has changed significantly, as the area of international migration has assumed prominence among issues of national and international concern. Many more Governments now consider migration and its consequences to be significant for their countries. By 1995, 40 per cent of countries had developed policies to raise or lower immigration and 24 per cent to raise or lower emigration.

31. Major changes in Governments' perceptions of migration trends took place during the second half of the 1970s and the early 1980s. In the context of economic recession, Governments' concerns over the consequences of both immigration and emigration increased, particularly in developed countries. In 1976, only 6 per cent of Governments viewed immigration as too high, but this percentage rose to 13 per cent in 1980 and reached 19 per cent in 1983. Although less striking, changes in the perception of emigration were also significant: 20 per cent of Governments in 1983 found the level of emigration too high versus 13 per cent in 1976. Governments' perceptions of both immigration and emigration levels have shown remarkably little change since 1983. On the other hand, the number of Governments adopting measures to control and often reduce these flows kept growing until recently. The percentage of countries with policies to lower immigration steadily increased, from 6 per cent in 1976 to 19 per cent in 1986; it had jumped to 32 per cent by 1989 and reached 35 per cent by 1993 (see figure). In 1995, the percentage stood at 33 per cent. A reversal occurred after 1989 with respect to emigration policies. The percentage of countries seeking to lower emigration, which had increased from 13 to 25 per cent between 1976 and 1989, fell to 20 per cent in 1993.

32. Developed countries showed the strongest inclination towards restricting immigration, but developing countries are following the same trend. As of 1995, 29 per cent of the developed countries considered immigration levels to be too high, as did 18 per cent of the developing countries. These numbers signified an increase over 1976, when only 8 per cent of developed countries and 3 per cent of developing countries viewed immigration levels as too high. With respect to policies, far fewer countries now pursue a policy of non-intervention, and this is true for both developed and developing countries. In 1976, 59 per cent of developed countries had policies of non-intervention, whereas only 18 per cent had such policies in 1995. In developing countries, 80 per cent had policies of no intervention in 1976, compared with 42 per cent in 1995. During the same period, the percentage of Governments having a policy to reduce immigration increased from 26 per cent in 1976 to 43 per cent in 1995 for the developed countries, and from 3 to 29 per cent for the developing countries.

Proportion of countries in various country groups and regions with policies to lower immigration

(Percentage)



33. With regard to emigration, both developed and developing countries show an increased propensity to intervene. The percentage of Governments with a policy of non-intervention decreased from 79 per cent in 1976 to 48 per cent in 1995 for developed countries and from 61 to 55 per cent among developing countries.

34. Many factors can explain the increased adoption of immigration and emigration policies. In Eastern and South-eastern Asia, a growing number of countries are attracting foreign workers while simultaneously experiencing the emigration of their citizens and have consequently begun to adopt measures aimed at limiting the admission of foreigners. In Western Asia, there have been significant changes in the country of origin and number of foreign workers since the 1970s. In the receiving countries of Europe in the 1990s, migration policies have responded to the growing influx of asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants. Another major development is the process of harmonization of national policies on international migration and refugees in conjunction with the planned elimination of internal borders among members of the European Union.

35. Migration policies are major determinants of migration trends, but changes in the latter can also lead to changes in migration policy. All States address two principal policy issues concerning migration: regulating the number and type of migrants; and formulating policies to influence the conditions of migrants within the country. The first area generates questions about immigration in terms of intake; while the second entails a set of questions

referring to the nature of incorporation, or what should be done with migrants once they have arrived.

(a) Permanent or long-term migrants. In the current international context, permanent migration is very different from the earlier patterns that characterized the redistribution of human populations. No longer are nations seeking to populate vast unsettled regions and develop land and natural resources by recruiting permanent migrants.

36. Only a small number of countries admit a significant number of immigrants for permanent settlement - chiefly Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. Policies for permanent settlement in these countries increasingly put a greater emphasis on migrant skills. In the early 1990s, both Canada and the United States revised their immigration policies to place a greater emphasis on such skills. In addition, in Australia, Canada and the United States, immigrants admitted through family reunification account for high proportions of immigrant intake. Also, some countries have policies aimed at selective permanent immigration to repatriate ethnic emigrants and to promote the return of ethnic descendants.

(b) Labour migration. In the 1990s, policies and programmes addressing labour migration stem from issues concerned with worldwide economic stagnation and its effect on migration, temporary versus permanent labour migration, utilization of remittances, and the brain drain. Also of concern are such issues as the exploitation of migrant workers; the rights of migrant workers; the needs of female migrant workers; and the return of migrant workers to their countries of origin at the end of their contracts.

37. The migration of workers across international boundaries continues to increase in both volume and geographical scope. While sources of migrants grow, and migration pressure mounts, the number of people the receiving countries are willing to admit is declining. Countries that experience labour shortages are increasingly turning to solutions other than importing workers. These include building factories abroad and exporting jobs, increasing the productivity of current workers by modernizing factories and mobilizing underutilized groups in the domestic labour force (for example, women and older workers).

38. One area of labour migration that continues to be promoted is that of temporary foreign labour and high-skill-type jobs. The rationale behind most temporary migration policies is not only to meet immediate labour shortages, but also to counteract undocumented immigration while avoiding long-term or permanent immigration and its accompanying social costs.

(c) Refugees and asylum-seekers. The 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol inform national policies towards refugees, but new developments and current conditions have led many countries to redefine and reformulate their asylum policies.

39. With the increase in the number of requests for asylum in the early 1990s, many developed countries have adopted measures to limit the number of asylum-seekers and reduce claims from economic migrants and fraudulent refugees. Procedures have been streamlined to accelerate processing and prohibit entry to

persons whose requests are unfounded. The Dublin Convention Determining the State Responsible for Examining Applications for Asylum Lodged in One of the Member States of the European Community, adopted by countries of the European Community in 1990, coordinates asylum processing among countries to prevent asylum-seekers from filing applications in more than one country simultaneously. Other measures to protect refugees have also been devised, both by individual countries and by UNHCR. They include the establishment of designated "safe areas" within countries affected by conflict, and the granting of temporary protected status for short-term asylum.

(d) Undocumented migration. Measures concerning undocumented migrants aim at stemming one of the fastest growing forms of migration in the world today. Trafficking in immigrants is a growing and profitable industry and one partly controlled by international crime syndicates. Increasing numbers of undocumented migrants from different countries are smuggled into the West via routes in Eastern Europe that developed after the disappearance of the rigid border controls of the Soviet era. Lenient visa requirements and limited law enforcement have made some countries common entry points for undocumented migrants.

40. Although virtually all Governments report that they seek to halt the flow of undocumented migrants, many do not implement policies or programmes to control the entry or stay of migrants. Among the measures used by Governments to address the problem of illegal migrants are border patrols, workplace inspections, identity checks inside the country, repatriation, employer sanctions, and airline penalties. The Governments of some receiving countries have resorted to expulsions of undocumented migrants. At the other end of the spectrum are regularization drives and amnesty programmes.

IV. DOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

41. Policies concerning documented migrants involve two distinct components; first, questions concerning regulations and control of the size of the flow and type of migrant, and second, those concerning the conditions of migrants once they are inside the country. Regulations on family reunification, citizenship and naturalization, and measures regarding integration, are intricately linked to each other. Thus, where naturalization and family reunification are common, integration of immigrants into the country may be facilitated.

42. While international instruments have bestowed both direct and indirect civil and humanitarian rights on migrants, States have diverged in their implementation of these norms. In pursuit of national interests, and as manifestations of their sovereignty, States have undertaken a variety of approaches and policy responses.

(a) Social, political, economic and cultural integration. As immigrants become long-term residents, the host society has to adapt to the presence of ethnically, culturally, linguistically, religiously and socio-economically diverse groups in its midst. These differences can challenge traditional notions of national identity and, sometimes, hostility to foreigners among certain groups may arise. Governments are sometimes faced with disenfranchised

minorities in their countries. Integration can be hindered by migrants' marginal situations, in which they lack the means to integrate effectively because of economic disadvantages, lack of qualifications, insecurity of residence, unfamiliarity with the host culture, and deliberate or unconscious discrimination. Immigration policy increasingly focuses on how to manage these conflicts.

(b) Citizenship, nationality, and naturalization. In pursuit of their national interests, and as manifestations of their sovereignty, States have undertaken substantially different approaches to the question of nationality. The complexity of approaches to citizenship acquisition, compounded by the fact that one country may have several eligibility requirements, makes it difficult to devise a comparative scheme for analysis. In general, however, citizenship may be acquired in any of four ways, or any combination of the four: by descent or jus sanguinis (literally, the law or right of blood); by birth or jus soli (the law or right of the soil); by naturalization; or by other means such as registration, declaration and restoration. While most people obtain their citizenship at birth, an increasing number change citizenship or acquire an additional one later on during their lives.

(c) Family reunification: policies and issues. While no international or regional instrument establishes family reunification as a right of international migrants, there is widespread acceptance of the principle that States should facilitate the admission to their territories of the immediate family members of their own citizens or of foreigners who have acquired the right to long-term residence. National laws and regulations on migration establish the conditions under which family reunification can take place, conditions that vary according to the status of the sponsor (usually a migrant him- or herself). In most countries, foreigners admitted temporarily, especially those admitted as workers, cannot be accompanied by their immediate relatives.

V. UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

43. In recent years, undocumented migration has been perceived as a major concern for a growing number of countries. Although the number of undocumented migrants is inherently difficult to determine, the limited information that exists suggests that it has risen significantly in some countries in spite of a proliferation of measures and policy responses. Undocumented migration has existed for a long time and was in many cases tolerated, but economic recession and high unemployment have changed the context, and some sectors, as reflected in public opinion, feel undocumented migrants are compromising their social and economic security, and have been vocal about Government inability to regulate flows. At the core of the issue are questions concerning State capacity to control or manage migration flows.

VI. REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

44. The worldwide refugee population has risen substantially over the past 30 years: from under 2 million refugees in 1965 to some 13.2 million today. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees identified what is still a major root cause of refugee flows: persecution based on who the refugee is (in terms of race, nationality, membership in a particular social group) or on what he or she believes (religion or political opinion). However, categorizing an applicant as a refugee or migrant constitutes a complex issue further complicated by a number of legal and practical factors. One factor derives from the way in which Governments have interpreted the 1951 Convention, which describes a refugee as someone who has a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" in his or her country of origin "for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (article 1.A.2). Many States have extended this definition to include people who have fled their homeland to escape from generalized violence, internal conflicts or serious disturbances to public order. The refugee/migrant distinction is further complicated by a number of other considerations. Countries that are affected by political chaos or widespread violence are often countries with low or negative rates of economic growth, declining social welfare standards, high inflation and mounting unemployment. Asylum-seekers may therefore appear to be motivated by material hardship and the desire to establish a better standard of living.

45. From the point of view of potential receiving countries, the problem of refugees and asylum-seekers has assumed various dimensions. Firstly, for some countries, asylum-seekers are arriving at a time when many Governments are seeking to limit the level and type of migration. Secondly, an influx of asylum-seekers represents a financial burden for countries. A third problem can be the condition of asylum-seekers in the host communities. In this context, many receiving States have taken steps, during the past decade, to prevent or deter asylum-seekers from arriving on their territory and to accelerate the procedures employed to examine their claims to refugee status.

46. Managed migration has long formed part of the international community's response to the refugee problem. An important illustration is the practice of refugee resettlement. Also, the migration management concept has come to encompass a broad range of initiatives that seek to address not only the consequences but also the causes of refugee and migratory movements. During the past few years, there has been a growing interest in a further form of orderly migration: the repatriation of asylum-seekers who, after examination of their claim, have been proved not to qualify for refugee status and to be in no need of international protection. There is now an emerging consensus that people who have filed asylum claims but who are judged, in accordance with due process, not to need international protection should, in normal circumstances, be asked to go back to their own country. However, despite the very large number of asylum-seekers whose applications are rejected, Governments have often been unable or unwilling to remove them from their territory. In some cases, the unsuccessful applicants have gone underground or moved on to another country. Sometimes, rejected asylum-seekers have been able to find work, and the authorities have turned a blind eye to their presence; and in many situations, Governments have been reluctant to bear the financial and political costs of organizing large-scale deportation programmes. Thus, according to several

estimates provided to UNHCR, only 20-25 per cent of the unsuccessful asylum-seekers in Western Europe go back to their homeland voluntarily or under the auspices of the receiving State.

47. Refugees in the less developed regions of the world have gained relatively few material benefits from the economic and social provisions of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees for the simple reason that the countries to which they flee are typically poor. While refugees living in organized camps sometimes benefit from services that are as good as (if not better than) those available to the surrounding population, refugee populations in the less developed countries generally find themselves in more difficult socio-economic circumstances than those they experienced in their homeland. The situation of refugees who have made their way to the industrialized States can be quite different. Many of these refugees have found that their standard of living, although poor by local standards, is considerably better than they could expect at home. Organized integration programmes often provided in such societies - language classes, special housing programmes and counselling services, as well as training and employment initiatives - have enabled many refugees and their children to adapt successfully. As a result, they have generally been less inclined to repatriate than refugees who have found asylum in less affluent countries.

48. Whether asylum should lead to integration, or whether it should be a means of providing protection until repatriation is possible, has become a particularly important issue. For all its advantages, temporary protection poses a number of problems that still remain to be fully resolved. The rights and entitlements of beneficiaries need to be better defined, as do the duration of temporary protection, the criteria for its cessation and the conditions required for repatriation. In view of the fact that conditions in a country of origin may not improve as quickly as initially anticipated, it must be decided at what point the beneficiaries of temporary protection should have their asylum claims examined on an individual basis, or, alternatively, be offered the full range of rights and entitlements enjoyed by people who are recognized as refugees under the 1951 Convention.

VII. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION

49. Policies on labour migration have been shaped largely by four important developments: first, the redirection of economically motivated movements to the gates reserved for refugees and asylum-seekers as people sought a way around growing restrictions on the admission of foreign labour; second, the rapid expansion of trade and foreign investment flows and their impact on the circulation of professionals and highly skilled workers; third, the intensifying economic integration among States, notably through the European Union and the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) in Latin America, and the implications of such integration for common frontier policies; finally the political changes in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the USSR, which have led to new waves of migration within and out of the region.

50. Within the last decade, the member States of the European Union witnessed the dismantlement of the formal obstacles to labour mobility that had existed

within the European Community. The employment of European Union citizens in European Union member States other than their own has been a stable phenomenon for many years. Today some 2.5 million nationals of European Union member States are working in a country other than their own within the Union. The non-European Union foreign labour population has risen steeply since 1988. The workers have come mostly from the former Yugoslavia and the Eastern European States, Turkey and the Maghreb. A number of bilateral agreements on the importation and employment of Eastern European workers on a "rotation principle" have also been entered into. In 1993, there were 2.5 million citizens of Central and Eastern Europe in the European Union countries.

51. In Central and Eastern Europe, changes in migration laws have been adopted in many countries since the late 1980s. These largely conformed to international standards which guarantee the rights of residents to free movement and the non-discriminatory treatment of migrant workers. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the political changes have led to a decline in the number of foreign workers. The former Czechoslovakia imported foreign workers from Viet Nam, Angola, Mongolia and Poland and their numbers hovered around 100,000 until 1990. The number of foreign workers declined to less than 15,000 in mid-1992. In Hungary, where it was estimated that there were some 50,000 illegal workers in 1992, some 50,000 work permits have been issued annually for jobs that are not being filled by nationals. In the Russian Federation, it is estimated that between 300,000 and 500,000 foreigners, coming mainly from the former Soviet republics and China, are either employed illegally or in transit to other destinations.

52. In Australia, Canada and the United States, policy changes have led to the opening of more doors to people whose skills or know-how are considered in short supply in the labour market and to those who can contribute to the development of science and technology. They include professionals and persons of exceptional ability, and those able to bring in capital. In the United States, the Immigration Act of 1990 led to a near-tripling of the share of employment-based visas issued every year, from 54,000 to 140,000. Canada's immigration policy, as reflected in past levels of intake of temporary workers and labour-force immigrants, does not suggest a trend towards growing restrictiveness. From a level of 115,500 in 1981, the aggregate number of temporary and immigrant workers admitted into the country rose to 347,800 in 1990. Australia, as Canada, has an administrative policy that enables the Government to adjust annually the level of immigration according to national priorities, especially labour-market needs. Admissions under employer-nominated schemes and labour agreements fluctuate with conditions in the labour market.

53. For the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the last three or four decades have seen the growth of considerable intraregional refugee and labour migration flows. The promoting of regional economic blocs has brought to the policy agenda the question of integrating these countries' labour markets more formally through harmonization of migration policies and removal of restrictions on cross-border flows of labour. The earliest example of efforts at multilateral levels was the Andean Agreement on Migrations which, together with the Andean Social Security Agreement, formed an integral part of the 1973 Cartagena Agreement.

54. In Western Asia, particularly the Persian Gulf States where the 1970s and early 1980s saw temporary labour migration rising rapidly, Governments have recently been announcing measures to progressively "nationalize" the labour market. Contract labour migration flows to the Gulf countries had slumped in the mid-1980s because of the large drops in oil revenues and the consequent decline in construction but rose to earlier levels in the following years, although the rise was interrupted by the Gulf war. The flows changed progressively in terms of composition, shifting towards more workers in low-skill service occupations for which admission policies continued to be liberal. Pressure is now being put on these Governments to cut back on the number of foreign workers in their respective countries as a result of the rising levels of unemployment among young and educated nationals entering the labour force for the first time.

55. In Eastern Asia, the 1980s saw a rapid increase of labour migration on account of the sustained high rates of economic growth experienced by a number of countries. Japan and the newly industrialized States have been experiencing increases in the numbers of foreign workers, many of them undocumented.

56. In Africa, there has also been a clear trend towards restrictions on the admission of foreign labour. Notwithstanding these restrictions, cross-border movements of people have been on the rise. The main poles of attraction for the migrant workers are the mineral-rich countries - the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, South Africa, Zaire and Zambia - as well as the plantations of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

VIII. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND GENDER ISSUES

57. In 1990, the number of women living outside their country of birth was estimated at 57 million worldwide, representing 48 per cent of world migrant stock. The more developed regions attract female and male international migrants in approximately equal numbers, while in the less developed regions male migrants clearly outnumber female migrants. At the same time, a majority of female (as well as male) migrants - about 30 million in 1990 - live in the less developed regions.

58. The large majority of migrant women are involved in voluntary migration. Although women's propensity to migrate is significantly influenced by their family and marital status, research shows that women are key actors in this process and often play a key role in migration decisions. Migration often provides women with an opportunity to engage in waged employment and thereby increases their ability, through remittances, to improve the welfare of the family remaining in the country of origin.

59. In most countries, migration regulations are not gender-specific. Yet, migration laws and policies tend to assume that female migrants are dependants joining other migrants rather than initiators of migration themselves. In labour-importing countries of Europe and Western Asia, recruitment efforts have long targeted workers for male-dominated occupations. Consequently, women's opportunities to migrate have been more limited. At the same time, the residence and work entitlement of migrants' relatives has often been subject to

many restrictions which have tended to reinforce the status of female migrants within the family as economic dependants of migrant workers. In contrast, in countries favouring migration for resettlement, where dependants such as children and spouses are given admission preference, women have tended to predominate among the foreign-born. In fact, recent years have witnessed an increase in migration flows under family reunification schemes in Western Europe, while employment opportunities in female-dominated occupations have significantly increased in Western Asia.

60. The 1990s have witnessed a feminization of Asian labour migration, with women moving more and more in their own right as autonomous economic migrants, rather than as dependants of male migrants. The main sending countries involved in this trend have been the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Women accounted for about 55 per cent of all overseas land-based contract workers leaving the Philippines in 1993, and about 70 per cent of those leaving Indonesia in 1993-1994 and Sri Lanka in 1994. The major receiving countries have been Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore, in Eastern and South-eastern Asia, and Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, among the Persian Gulf countries. The increase in Asian female labour migration has been driven by a growing demand in a few female-dominated activities such as domestic service, entertainment and, to a lesser extent, nursing and teaching.

61. Statistics indicate that women make up half of the total number of refugees. While men and women are found in approximately equal numbers among refugees in a majority of countries, the percentage of women among refugees varies within a relatively large range. At the lower end, women represented less than 15 per cent of refugees in Angola and Cuba and about 25 per cent in Western Asian countries such as Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Yemen at the beginning of 1996. At the higher end, Yugoslavia stood out with 83 per cent of women among the refugees it hosted.

62. In addition to the problems experienced by all refugees, whether men or women, refugee women and girls have special needs. In particular, they need protection against sexual and physical abuse and exploitation as well as against discrimination in employment. The increasing recognition that programmes for refugees must address these needs led the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to issue a series of guidelines for field operations such as the Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women (EC/SCP/67) issued in 1991 and Sexual Violence against Refugees: Guidelines for Prevention and Response[12] issued in 1995.

63. Trafficking in migrant women is an issue of great concern. The full scale of the problem remains unknown, although it is generally believed that the number of migrants who resort to traffickers for the purpose of organizing their migration has increased significantly in the recent past. A profitable migration industry has developed in the form of sophisticated international networks, which have attracted individual criminals and criminal organizations. More effective and closer international cooperation among the countries of destination, origin and transit, whether in terms of judicial, law enforcement or police cooperation, is needed to make the prevention and the suppression of trafficking in women more effective.

IX. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

64. Migration both affects and is affected by socio-economic development. However, given the multiple ways in which international migration can interact with development and the tendency of research to focus on just a few interactions, current knowledge regarding the interrelations between international migration and development is far from complete and few generalizations are possible.

65. There is no comprehensive theory of the causes of international migration. According to neoclassical economic theory, migration is brought about by wage differentials between countries, which are themselves brought about by the varied endowments of labour relative to capital that characterize different countries. In practice, the relation between relative wages and international migration is complex, so that large wage differentials between countries do not by themselves trigger migration. Indeed, a striking feature of international migration is that it has a very low responsiveness to international wage differentials.

66. According to the "new economics of migration", migration is used by households to minimize risk and loosen constraints associated with market failures in the sending countries. Thus, by having some family members work abroad, households diversify their sources of income and minimize risks to their economic well-being. In addition, the remittances generated by migrants provide households with the capital needed to increase the productivity of assets in the community of origin. Thus, if development induces an increase in the return to local economic activities, it may also make migration more attractive as a means of overcoming capital constraints. In addition, households with lower incomes in a community may feel deprived in relation to better-off households and their relative deprivation may prompt them to participate in migration so as to increase their incomes. Hence, if the development process increases income differentials, it may lead to stronger migration pressures among relatively deprived households.

67. International migration is also influenced by the situation in countries of destination. The labour markets of developed countries are characterized by the coexistence of a capital-intensive primary sector and a labour-intensive secondary sector where jobs are unstable and wages low. This segmented labour market can result in a permanent demand for foreign workers, who are needed to fill the secondary-sector jobs that natives reject. Once international migration has begun, certain mechanisms maintain its momentum even after the factors responsible for initiating the flow have lost their relevance. Migration networks, characterized as the interpersonal ties based on kinship, friendship or shared community origin that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in areas of origin and destination, contribute to the sustaining of migration flows. Thus, the assistance provided to new migrants by friends and relatives already established abroad reduces the costs and risks of migration, and increases the probability of further movement.

A. The root causes of international migration

68. It has been contended that excessive population growth in developing countries produces large labour-force increases which cannot be absorbed and therefore result in migration to developed countries. However, the evidence available does not support the view that levels of emigration from developing to developed regions are related to regional population growth rates.

69. Environmental change is considered a root cause of migration when it acts via income effects (reduces average income), risk effects (increases the instability of average income) or social effects (makes the environment less pleasant or healthy). However, most of the resulting migration occurs within countries and is economically motivated, since persons leave their places of origin because of reduced or unstable incomes. At the international level, the portion of migration that has been directly or indirectly linked to environmental causes is small. In extreme cases, environmental change may remove the economic foundation of a community altogether and result in compulsory movements akin to those of refugees.

70. Poverty is another factor cited as a root cause of international migration. If poverty is measured in terms of a person's relative economic position in the society of origin, most international migrants are not poor, since they belong mostly in the middle range of the income scale of the country of origin. Even in the case of forced migration, extreme economic deprivation does not seem to generate sizeable numbers of asylum-seekers or refugees. Sustained economic deprivation is more likely to produce powerlessness than migration. Thus, countries where development has stagnated have not been the most common sources of economically motivated migration. Such migration has been more likely to occur in countries that have already reached a certain level of development and are advancing in the development path.

71. Good governance requires that human rights be respected. Violations of human rights are often symptomatic of deep-rooted political and social problems that are destabilizing and may lead to forced migration. However, the evidence available suggests that individuals are more likely to flee from situations that threaten their lives than from those that curtail their political and economic rights.

B. Trade, development assistance and migration

72. According to neoclassical economics, trade liberalization, by allowing countries to specialize in the production of goods for which they have a comparative advantage and to import the goods that they do not produce, will increase wages in labour-rich countries and thus discourage emigration. However, because the assumptions on which this assertion depends may not be satisfied in practice, the effect of trade liberalization on relative wages cannot be predicted with certainty. In reality, trade and international migration may be complements of, instead of substitutes for, one another. Thus, when households in countries of origin experience liquidity constraints, trade liberalization, by creating new employment in those countries, may provide the means of financing international migration and thus increase its likelihood.

Furthermore, when adjustment to trade reforms produces a rise in unemployment, migration pressures will likely increase. Depending on the assumptions made, models of particular economies reach different conclusions about the effects of trade liberalization.

73. In the case of Mexico and the United States, most analysts agree that the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) may result in higher migration pressures in Mexico over the short-to-medium term because of the dislocation of labour in small-scale agriculture. However, if NAFTA helps to foster and maintain economic growth over at least a decade, the hope of betterment at home could reduce migration pressures.

74. Use of official development assistance to reduce migration pressures may not be effective because the level of aid required is usually very high and because piecemeal aid initiatives are unlikely to be successful.

C. Impact of international migration on countries of origin

75. International migration can affect the economic development of countries of origin in various ways. Its impact on unemployment is generally small because the number of migrants is usually low compared with the total labour force and those migrating need not have been economically active in the country of origin. Migration may also cause specific skill shortages that may hinder economic growth, especially when they involve highly skilled personnel. Yet, developing countries in need of technical expertise to fuel development have been drawing on foreign technical advisers as a short-term solution. Countries with stagnating economies are more likely to have trouble training and keeping their highly skilled personnel.

76. One of the major impacts of international migration on countries of origin is the generation of remittances, which are a major source of foreign exchange earnings for countries of origin. In 1989, remittances amounted to US$ 61 billion worldwide, a figure that compares favourably with the US$ 47 billion provided as official development assistance by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member States to developing countries. Remittances can be used to import capital goods and the essential inputs required to promote investment and capacity utilization, thereby advancing economic development. Remittances deposited in local banks can provide capital to local entrepreneurs. However, remittances have been thought to foster dependency on imports and promote high levels of consumption that can result in inflationary pressures. The evidence validating these views remains weak and contradictory. Remittances are also viewed as unpredictable because demands for manpower can presumably have wide swings, although trends in remittances from 1960 to 1985 show no such sudden or rapid changes. At the microlevel, remittances can augment household income and savings, facilitate purchases of consumer durables and investment in productive assets, and alter the local income distribution. Ultimately, remittances are more likely to promote development in countries that have sufficient productive flexibility to respond positively to their stimulus.

77. Return migration can have a positive impact on development depending on whether the country of origin provides a propitious social and economic environment for the productive use of the skills and savings of return migrants. In most contexts, return migrants exhibit an inclination towards consumption rather than productive investment, and towards investment in trade or services rather than investment in industry. Return migrants often have trouble finding suitable employment and many prefer to establish their own small businesses. However, the businesses they set up tend to be small in scale and ineffective as job creation ventures, thus providing few stimuli for development.

D. The impact of international migration on countries of destination

78. When a country experiences labour shortages, the availability of foreign workers allows the productive use of capital that would otherwise remain idle, thereby enhancing economic growth. However, if unemployment is high, the effects of labour migration on economic growth have to be qualified. In some contexts, the effects of labour migration on output growth are meagre because the jobs occupied by foreign workers tend to have low productivity. Because of the diversity of empirical settings and the fact that assessments are based on assumptions that are not always satisfied in practice, there is no consensus on the impact of international migration on aggregate measures of economic performance in the countries of destination.

79. Another important issue has been the impact of migration on the wages of non-migrants. Although serious methodological problems hinder studies in this area, the evidence available shows that the relationship between non-migrant wages and level of international migration is weak, implying that migrant workers are not substitutes for non-migrants.

80. Lastly, concern about the possibility that immigrants become dependent on welfare has prompted a series of studies on whether immigrants pay their way. As several authors have noted, the conclusions of such studies are highly dependent on the assumptions made about the contribution to public revenue provided by immigrants and the costs that immigrants entail. Few firm conclusions can be drawn from the studies available because their findings are neither comparable nor comprehensive and do not provide reliable estimates of the net fiscal costs or benefits of immigration.

X. FINAL REMARKS

81. International migration and development are interrelated and the linkages are numerous and complex. These linkages, the size, type and direction of migration movements, and national policies are all a function of the political, economic and social contexts of the time. Although there is considerable policy interest in the root causes of international migration and the impacts on sending and receiving countries, in particular the social and economic consequences, understanding of the direction and magnitude of such effects is still in its infancy. As a result, running through all discussions of migration are three common threads: the lack of migration data, the absence of a coherent

theory to explain international migration and the very weak understanding of the complex interrelationships between migration and development.

Notes

[1] Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, 1974, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

[2] Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8), chap. I, sect. B.

[3] See International Labour Conventions and Recommendations, 1919-1981 (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1982).

[4] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[5] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

[6] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 7 (E/1995/27).

[8] Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[9] Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (A/CONF.166/9), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[10] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[11] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1001, No. 14691.

[12] Geneva, UNHCR, 1995.